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REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995

High-level posts

Third report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the Secretary-General's report relating to high-level posts (A/C.5/48/9 and Add.1).

2. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 3 of the addendum to his report that the Secretary-General proposes to redeploy to the Department of Peace-keeping Operations a post at the Assistant Secretary-General level, currently in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, heading the Protocol and Liaison Service. This would give the Department of Peace-keeping Operations a senior structure of one Under-Secretary-General and two Assistant Secretaries-General. The protocol and liaison functions would be exercised at the D-2 level utilizing a post within the existing staffing table of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General. The Committee shares the view of the Secretary-General that it is necessary to strengthen the senior management of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations to enhance its capacity to cope with the major increase in the range and scope of its responsibilities. As for the protocol and liaison post, the Committee recalls that in its first report on the proposed programme budget for 1986-1987 it recommended against reclassifying the D-2 post of the Chief of Protocol to the level of Assistant Secretary-General. 1/ In the circumstances, the Committee recommends approval of these proposals.

3. As indicated in paragraph 19 of his report (A/C.5/48/9) with regard to the Department of Political Affairs, "in furtherance of an integrated approach, the Secretary-General proposes that the Department be headed by a single Under-Secretary-General supported by two Assistant Secretaries-General". The

Committee is in agreement with this proposal. However, in order to give effect to the proposal, the Committee recommends that the additional Assistant Secretary-General post be accommodated through the downgrading of the Under-Secretary-General post proposed for abolition in paragraph 4 of the addendum to the Secretary-General's report, pending such action as the General Assembly may take with regard to the restructuring of the Department of Administration and Management (see para.6 below).

4. As indicated in paragraph 8 of the addendum to his report, the Secretary-General proposes to establish a post at the Assistant Secretary-General level to provide for a senior manager for the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). The Committee recalls that the General Assembly, in paragraph 3 (c) of section I of its resolution 47/212 B:

> "Decides to defer action on the proposal of the Secretary-General to abolish the post of Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and requests him to reconsider his proposal and to report in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 on the future secretariat support arrangements for the United Nations Environment Programme and Habitat, including the question of separate senior management arrangements for Habitat, taking into account the views and recommendations of the Commission on Human Settlements, the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Economic and Social Council and the views expressed by Member States".

It is the view of the Committee that the Secretary-General's proposal regarding institutional arrangements in Nairobi is a policy question which requires an intergovernmental decision. In this connection, the Committee requests the Secretary-General to keep the proposal under review.

5. In paragraph 13 of his report, the Secretary-General proposes to leave two Assistant Secretary-General posts in the Department of Administration and Management. The Committee notes that one of the Assistant Secretaries-General would serve as Controller and oversee both the budgetary and personnel functions of the Department and the other would oversee both the functions relating to conference services and general services. The Committee recalls paragraph 3 (a) of section I of General Assembly resolution 47/212 B, by which the Assembly decided:

> "to defer action on the proposal of the Secretary-General to abolish the four high-level posts in the Department of Administration and Management and, in this regard, requested him to reconsider his proposals relating to these posts with a view to ensuring that the most senior officials of that Department have a degree of authority that is equivalent to that of the most senior officials in other areas of the United Nations".

6. In this connection, the Committee observes that the Secretary-General has not explained fully why he has decided to retain two Assistant Secretaries-General posts instead of four. The Committee is of the opinion that, by downgrading to a D-2 level the head of the Human Resources Management structure in the Secretariat, the Secretary-General does not meet the request contained in paragraph 2 of section I of General Assembly resolution 45/239 I "to strengthen

the role and emphasize the authority of the Office of Human Resources Management of the Secretariat in accordance with recommendations 41 of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administration and Financial Functioning of the United Nations". Moreover, while under the Secretary-General's proposal the Comptroller would have line authority over the Office of Programme Planning Budget and Finance in addition to supervising the Office of Human Resources Management, the precise nature of the functions of the second Assistant Secretary-General is unclear to the Committee. The Advisory Committee therefore recommends that the Secretary-General be requested to resubmit his proposals for the senior structure of the Department of Administration and Management, taking into account the relevant views and decisions of the General Assembly and the need to elaborate upon and fully explain and justify these proposals.

7. The Secretary-General proposes to redeploy two D-2 posts to the Department of Administration and Management, one from section 3 and the other from section 10 (see paras. 4 and 7 of the addendum to the Secretary-General's report). These redeployments are intended to compensate the two Assistant Secretaries-General posts redeployed from the Department of Administration and Management. The Committee recommends that, pending such action as the General Assembly may take with regard to the restructuring of the Department of Administration and Management, sections 3 and 10 should remain unchanged (see para. 6 above).

8. In paragraph 9 (c) of the addendum to his report, the Secretary-General proposes to redeploy to the Department of Administration and Management posts and operational resources relating to the provision of secretariat services to the General Assembly and to the Security Council. Upon inquiry, the Committee was informed that all the "substantive reports" submitted to either the General Assembly or the Security Council would be prepared by the substantive departments concerned. In this connection, it is the view of the Committee that since the secretariat services of other intergovernmental policy-making organs of the United Nations like the Economic and Social Council have not been transferred, the functional basis for the transfer has not been consistently applied. The Committee was also informed that several tasks carried out in this unit involve substantive matters and, as such, require knowledge and experience in the political area. The Committee recommends that the Secretary-General should be requested to explain further the reasons for this proposal.

9. The proposal relating to the Office of Inspections and Investigations is outlined in paragraph 10 of the addendum to the Secretary-General's report. The Committee's recommendations on this proposal appear in its report on the Secretary-General's report on the office of Inspections and Investigations (A/C.5/48/42).

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 7 (A/40/7, para. 1.30).